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Editorial Notes: Our Persian Gulf Veterans

Rose Davidson
Iowa State University

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1991 Norden Distinguished Teacher Award

Dan Drahos*

When I was asked to write an article on the 1991 Norden Distinguished Teacher Award recipient Dr. James Noxon, I immediately thought, "Oh, this will be easy. Dr. Noxon is a good friend and it will be fun." But when it came down to describing why he is such a good instructor, I was miffed.

After analyzing Dr. Noxon's style, I realized his distinguished ability to teach does not lie so much in his "teaching", but in his ability to make students want to learn. This he accomplishes both in and out of the classroom.

In the classroom, his enthusiasm is tough for any instructor to match. Dr. Noxon believes that learning should be enjoyable which is why he likes to include clinical examples in his lectures. He also explains why things are important and not just facts and procedures.

His enthusiasm is also indicated in his extra efforts in developing special "computer aided instruction" material for his dermatology section in medicine class. These case simulations give students a feel for clinical diagnosing and treating...including the bill!

Outside the classroom is probably where he has the biggest impact on student learning. Dr. Noxon realizes that even though we may be students now, we will be his colleagues in just a few short years. He cuts out the lag period and treats us not only as colleagues, but as friends.

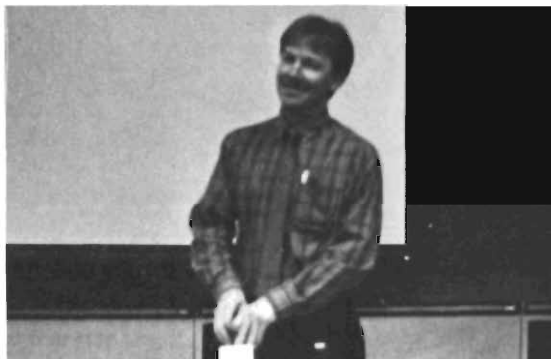
*Dan Drahos is a third year student in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University.

Dr. Noxon's heavy involvement in extracurricular activities (basketball, sailing, OTS [Omega Tau Sigma, ISU Vet Med's fraternity], and the yearly talent show, to name just a few) gives students another view of who he really is and a chance to know him on a personal level. This makes it easier to believe and understand him in the classroom. It also makes us realize that his enthusiasm is genuine.

Dr. James Noxon earned his DVM in 1976 from Colorado State University. After working in an AAHA certified private practice in Denver for two years, he traveled to the University of Missouri-Columbia to do his residency in internal medicine. It was here where he got turned on to dermatology and decided to give teaching a try.

A year later, in 1982, he left Missouri to teach at Iowa State University. Along with being the dermatology specialist in the clinics, he teaches this topic in medicine class and provides dermatology and feline medicine electives. He is very active in programs related to the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine as well as giving dermatology speeches at many continuing education seminars.

If asked 12 years ago what he would be doing today, the last thing he would have guessed would be teaching. As a student here at ISU, I am glad he chose the road toward education. If asked today what he thinks about his career choice, again his enthusiasm would come forth by saying, "I like what I do."



Dr. J. D. Noxon